

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 03891 281638Z

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1187

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 3891

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, CA

SUBJ: MAURICE DIONNE, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO MINISTER OF
NATIONAL DEFENCE: BIO

1. MAURICE DIONNE WAS BORN AUGUST 26, 1936 AT BATH, NEW
BRUNSWICK. HE ATTENDED WOODSTOCK HIGH SCHOOL, NEW BRUNSWICK
TEACHERS' COLLEGE AND ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY. HE MARRIED
PRECILLE BABIN OF CHARLO, NEW BRUNSWICK. HE WAS FIRST ELECTED
TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN 1974; APPOINTED PARLIAMENTARY
SECRETARY TO MIN. OF NATIONAL DEFENCE IN OCTOBER 1975. HE
IS A LIBERAL.

2. COMMENT: DESPITE HIS NAME, DIONNE IS AN ANGLOPHONE AND
SPEAKS FRENCH WITH DIFFICULTY. A HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL BEFORE
ENTERING THE PARLIAMENT, DIONNE IS A SERIOUS PERSON WITH LITTLE
DISCERNIBLE SENSE OF HUMOR. HE IS UNUSUALLY INDUSTRIOUS,
CAREFULLY RESEARCHING MAJOR PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS BEFORE
MAKING UP HIS MIND ON A PARTICULAR VOTE. HE MENTIONED TO THE
ECON COUNS, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT ON THE HIGHLY EMOTIONAL CAPITAL
PUNISHMENT ISSUE, HE DETERMINED, AFTER CONSIDERABLE
STUDY, THAT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS NOT A DETERRENT TO
CRIME. BASED ON THIS RESEARCH AND NOT ON MORAL GROUNDS,
HE VOTED FOR ABOLITION.

3. DIONNE IS MARRIED WITH FIVE CHILDREN AGES 3 TO 13.
HIS WIFE IS PARTICULARLY QUIET AND HAS BEEN DESCRIBED
AS "ALMOST MOUSEY". THE DIONNES ARE APPARENTLY A
CLOSE FAMILY AND LIVE IN THE OTTAWA AREA RATHER THAN
IN DIONNE'S RIDING IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 03891 281638Z

ENDERS

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